

SITUATION REPORT NO 4
INCIDENT NO. 97-003
DATE: January 14, 1997 TIME: 2:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Winter storms and blizzard conditions statewide.
2. DEATH AND INJURIES: Three more deaths were attributed to the storm, bringing the total number of confirmed deaths to five. In addition to the two deaths reported previously, a third death occurred when a stranded 41-year-old Foster County motorist died of exposure. Two people died in Logan County when snow drifts prevented or slowed ambulances from reaching farm homes near Streeter and Fredonia. In addition, Rolette County officials were trying to confirm if a death that occurred this weekend was related to storm conditions.
3. DAMAGE: Challenges confronting State Emergency Operations recovery efforts involve transporting equipment from Bismarck to heavy snow sites on county roads. Snow removal efforts were at a virtual standstill in many counties because blowing snow would block roads as soon as plows had cleared paths. Snow removal efforts have also been periodically hampered by equipment breakdown.

Dairy farmers continue dumping milk because blocked roads are still preventing access to markets. In addition, county officials also continue to report cattle losses, the result of feed shortages and/or exposure of cattle to extreme temperatures.

As the state highway system opens, delivery trucks are reaching stores, and hence, reducing or eliminating grocery shortages. However, problems still exist in delivering groceries to stranded rural residents.

Senior services in many counties, including meal deliveries, have been disrupted for as much as three days.

While mail service in larger cities has been restored, blocked roads are preventing mail delivery in many rural areas.

Schools have reopened in larger cities, but remain closed in many rural areas where more of the students are dependent on school bus transportation.

4. RESOURCES COMMITTED:

LOCAL: Local and city governments continue to use all existing resources to respond to emergencies and to remove snow from roads. Those resources include: County Commissions, County Road Departments, County Coroners, Tribal Councils, Tribal Road Departments, City Councils/Commissions, City Public Works Departments, County Sheriffs, City Police Departments, Emergency Management agencies, County Social Services, and School Officials.

STATE: Resources from State agencies remain activated to respond to the disaster. Those resources include: the Governor's Office, N.D. Division of Emergency Management, N.D. National Guard, N.D. State Radio Communications, N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT), N.D. Highway Patrol, Office of Intergovernmental Assistance, N.D. Department of Human Services, and the N.D. Department of Public Instruction.

FEDERAL: Federal agencies responding to the disaster include: the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Department of Interior/Bureau of Indian Affairs.

- 5: VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: Private citizens continue to help their neighbors address snow-related problems. Snowmobile clubs and snow cat operators are assisting in rescue efforts of stranded motorists and with the delivery of food and medical supplies to rural residents, some of whom are also without electricity.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Governor Ed Schafer has activated the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to respond to local government requests for assistance with snow removal efforts and medical and fuel emergencies. The EOC includes representatives from the Division of Emergency Management, the National Guard, the N.D. DOT, State Radio Communications, and the Highway Patrol.

In keeping with a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration, FEMA-1157-DR-ND, issued January 12, the Governor has requested that Daniel Glickman, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary, approve appropriate agri-industry assistance programs.

Governor Schafer named Raymond J. Staiger, acting director of North Dakota Emergency Management, as state coordinating officer (SCO). He will work with FEMA to facilitate the state's recovery efforts.

Governor Schafer has activated the North Dakota National Guard to assist with

snow removal efforts. Approximately 30 National Guard soldiers will assist in clearing the following sections of highway: I-94, near Driscoll; N.D. Highway 36, from Pingree west to U.S. Highway 83; and N.D. Highway 200, from Carrington west to the intersection of N.D. Highway 14 and continuing south on N.D. Highway 14 to Sterling. Two large National Guard snow blowers will be assigned to the N.D. DOT office in Fargo.

Projected use of National Guard equipment by priority is as follows: Grant County, two dozers; Sioux County, two dozers and one rotary snow blower; Ransom County, two dozers and one rotary snow blower; Dickey County, two dozers; McIntosh County, two dozers; Kidder County, two dozers and one rotary snow blower; Logan County, two dozers; and Adams County, two dozers.

N.D. DOT crews were clearing roads on January 14 in south central North Dakota. Many state routes still have deep cuts remaining, allowing for only one-way travel for vehicles.

N.D. DOT has in use 18 snow blowers, 320 snow removal plow trucks, and 90 motor graders.

N. D. DOT continues to assist local and tribal governments in locating snow removal equipment for lease or rent using their existing data base.

Additional equipment resources secured by the N.D. DOT include: five additional snow blowers (three from the National Guard, and two from the State of Montana); and four dozers (all from the National Guard). In addition, the N.D. DOT is obtaining assistance from private contractors to provide assistance in roadway clearance.

State Radio Communications is assisting in providing communications and night phone service for the State Emergency Operations Center.

County officials are evaluating and prioritizing requests for assistance and coordinating with the State EOC. State officials will concentrate on providing emergency assistance to local governments and restoring the state transportation system.

Disaster or Emergency Declarations have been issued by the following counties: Adams, Barnes, Benson, Bowman, Burleigh, Cass, Cavalier, Dickey, Divide, Eddy, Emmons, Golden Valley, Grant, Grand Forks, Hettinger, Logan, McIntosh, Mountrail, Nelson, Pembina, Pierce, Ramsey, Ransom, Renville, Richland, Sargent, Sioux, Steele, Stutsman, Towner, Traill, Walsh, and Williams. The cities of Napoleon and Wing issued emergency declarations. A total of one tribe, three cities and 33 counties have issued declarations thus far.

In Sioux County, road graders cleared roadways to allow two dialysis patients to be transported to a Fort Yates treatment center and a Bismarck hospital.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Additional heavy equipment is needed to assist with snow removal efforts.
- 8: OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The National Weather Service forecasts another Arctic Storm System will sweep through North Dakota late January 14 and on January 15. Temperatures could drop to 10 below zero, and dangerous wind chills of 40 to 60 below are expected. In addition, considerable blowing and drifting snow will result in near blizzard conditions. Snowfall accumulations are expected to be under an inch.

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director